

CITY OF CAMBRIDGE

CAMBRIDGE, MASSACHUSETTS 02139
Tel. 876-6800

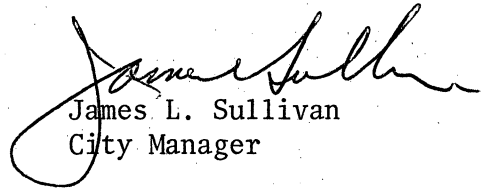
EXECUTIVE DEPARTMENT
JAMES L. SULLIVAN
City Manager

October 16, 1978

To the Honorable, the City Council:

I transmit herewith a copy of a communication
forwarded to Vice Mayor Lawrence W. Frisoli,
on October 5, 1978, relative to the East
Cambridge project.

Very truly yours,



James L. Sullivan
City Manager

JLS/b



CITY OF CAMBRIDGE

CAMBRIDGE, MASSACHUSETTS 02139
Tel. 876-6800

#4

EXECUTIVE DEPARTMENT
JAMES L. SULLIVAN
City Manager

October 5, 1978

Vice Mayor Lawrence W. Frisoli
City Hall
Cambridge, Massachusetts 02139

Dear Vice Mayor Frisoli:

The following is a point-by-point response to your letter to Secretary Harris of HUD dated July 17, 1978.

POINT 1

As originally discussed, the City is committing \$3.5 million to aid the East Cambridge community in developing a neighborhood stabilization plan. One million dollars will be committed from Community Development Block Grant funds over the next four years and will run parallel with the UDAG project. As stated in my letter to you, the additional \$2.5 million will be allocated from tax monies or otherwise for a ten-year period when the new private development begins to generate taxes to the City which will probably occur after the projected four to five year development period.

I would also like to add at this point that the four year neighborhood stabilization project was formulated because of the City's perception and ongoing policies that the neighborhoods of Cambridge must be protected from all varieties of socio-economic pressures. The program was part of the City's first UDAG application, submitted on January 31, 1978. Since HUD felt that it could not be funded as part of the City's overall development plan, a decision to fund the program with CDBG funds was made. The impression that the City grudgingly developed the program only "because of community opposition to this project" is not accurate. This is clearly apparent in records and tapes of community meetings.

To continue in the City's efforts to protect its neighborhoods, the City has presently hired an associate planner whose first and primary task will be to begin a neighborhood stabilization development process with the East Cambridge neighborhood. This effort has already been publicly announced.

In addition to housing rehab, home ownership programs, streets and sidewalk improvements, park improvements and other physical improvements, we will be addressing issues relating to the inflationary effects which the development might have upon property tax bills and inflated prices for houses which encourage residents to sell houses. As you know, the Council recently passed an order asking me to investigate all aspects of the process of what has become known as gentrification (attachment A). I firmly support the Council's concern and will place strong emphasis on developing solutions.

POINT 2

The so-called foreign organization referred to in your second point to Secretary Harris is apparently the Cambridge Multi-Cultural Arts Center, Inc. (CMAC). This group was started in the Spring of 1978 by City Councillor and State Representative Sandra Graham at the request of the City Council and a number of artists and performing groups in the City. The stated goals of this group are:

- to create a Center to provide services to arts and humanities groups now serving the City, and more importantly to provide assistance to new groups representing the cultural diversity of the City, and
- to stimulate interaction among different age groups in the City, bringing elderly and young families, children and adults to common activities.

The organization consists of a Corporate Board and a Board of Directors of 31 people. All of these Board of Directors members are either Cambridge residents or involved in arts and educational efforts in the City. Of the 31 members of the Board of Directors, 21 are Cambridge residents; four of these people are residents of East Cambridge. The non-residents consist of the East Cambridge/Kennedy School Community School Coordinator, the Director of the Cambridge Community Center, the pastor of the East Cambridge Holy Cross Polish Church, the Director of the East Cambridge Boys' Club, the Coordinator of the Cambridge Public Schools business education program, the Director of the Cambridge Institute of Contemporary Dance, a special programs teacher for Community Schools working in the Martin Luther King School and the Webster School, the Coordinator of the Cambridge Public Schools Cultural Resources, the Director of Art in the Cambridge Public Schools and finally, the Community Schools Coordinator for the Fletcher School.

It is difficult to understand how these Board members can be considered a "foreign non-profit organization." The importance of having a wide spectrum of representation on the Board of the Cambridge Multi-Cultural Arts Center, Inc. is obvious.

The statement that "the CMAC organization was chosen without community participation in an old fashion Massachusetts political manner," can be answered in the following way. The CMAC group approached the City for funding during the Block Grant review process in the Fall of 1977. They were told by the City that they must develop their own method of support for this activity because the City could not continually pay for ongoing human services. With this in mind, the group began looking for ways of implementing this project and studied the possibility of sharing building space and developing sources of income. During the Block Grant process CMAC became interested in the UDAG program and after considering the opportunities available to them, began to focus on the vacant Middlesex County Courthouse building. This group saw the building as a way of providing needed program space and income to pay for this space. The City was concerned about saving this old Bulfinch Building which was originally slated for demolition by the County and saw this as an innovative way of accomplishing human service goals, historic restoration goals, economic development goals and a way of alleviating a blighting influence on the East Cambridge neighborhood.

CMAC, after exploratory discussion with the county, made two public presentations to the County Commissioners at public meetings. The County Commissioners had been perplexed as to what to do with this building and made a decision to give this group the go ahead for community services and economic development. On March 14, 1978, the County Commissioners unanimously voted their intent to support the City's revitalization efforts and to allow the CMAC group to develop the building. There was press coverage of this in the newspapers and general knowledge of this action. I see nothing devious or underhanded about this activity. The community was told of the use of the Bulfinch Building in several meetings, press releases and informational flyers.

On the question of eminent domain and the taking of people's homes, it has been said in almost all meetings that have been held that there will be no eminent domain takings of people's homes. The City was so concerned about this rumor that a flyer was distributed by hand to every household in East Cambridge to provide an update of the project, announce another public meeting, and categorically state that no homes will be taken. (See attachment B - "A Summary of the East Cambridge/Lechmere Triangle Development Project"). In regards to your reference to page 33 of the UDAG application (attachment C), it is stated that a non-profit community group or a project-wide development group will be formed under Massachusetts Law 121A or 121C if it becomes necessary to take property by eminent domain. At the time this application was written, the City was evaluating the possibility of using one group for all development activities, much as a Community Development Corporation (CDC) would act. The group might have had participants from the CMAC Board, but would have consisted of representatives concerned with the entire Lechmere Project and would have been a general development group; thus the reference to a "project-wide development group". If a group of this type had been created, they would have been responsible for redeveloping the Bulfinch Building and all other major aspects of the project. Eminent domain has never been necessary for the Bulfinch Building and will not be used in connection with the Bulfinch Building. Further, the City has decided not to set up a CDC, but rather, to work with individual private developers on specific project components using whatever tools are necessary. Eminent domain will be used by the City for acquisition of land for public improvements such as garages, parks and roadways, but, as you know, all of these takings must be discussed and approved by the City Council.

Your final statement in this point, that the Cambridge Multi-Cultural Arts Group is not acceptable to the community, has not been evident in the many public meetings we have had on this project. Although it is doubtful that any one group could satisfy everybody in a neighborhood as diverse as East Cambridge, the participation of East Cambridge residents, the East Cambridge Boys' Club, the East Cambridge Community Schools Program, the Portuguese Organization (COPA), the pastor of the Polish Church, the East End House and others suggests that there is a definite level of support for these activities. All of these people and organizations are working in a positive manner to develop programs that will improve the educational and cultural services to East Cambridge.

POINT 3

It is difficult to respond to this point because we do not know which developer is referred to here. All of the private developers in Phase I including Lechmere Sales, Beal Co., Uni-Hab Housing, Sonesta Hotel and CMAC are moving ahead satisfactorily with project implementation to meet the UDAG requirements. The statement "Funding by this private commitment is to be considered if, and only if, your grant was awarded to Cambridge" is not a fault but a basic tenant of the UDAG application process. If developers were ready to implement private development without the UDAG grant, there would be no need for UDAG grants.

POINT 4

As discussed earlier, the City is aware of the potential economic pressures that may be exerted on the neighborhood. The problem is not analogous to the Boston west end redevelopment project. In this project the entire neighborhood was designated a renewal area and leveled to the ground. I agree that this project taught all of us many basic lessons. The UDAG project is directed at revitalization of the industrial/commercial edge of the East Cambridge neighborhood and is not designed to encourage spin off development in the neighborhood. Because we are aware of the potential economic pressures, we have tried to develop physical separations between the development area and the neighborhood with a clearly marked development boundary that generally runs down First Street demarcating a triangle designated for development. We have provided for open space connections for the neighborhood and linkages to the Courthouse complex to tie the project together. In addition to the physical and spatial boundaries, the City has drafted a Zoning Ordinance and filed this with the City Council. The Zoning Ordinance must be a balance between encouraging economic development of the Lechmere Triangle and meeting the urban design criteria of the City and protecting the neighborhood. The ordinance, as filed, downzones most of the triangle area and the industrial areas surrounding the neighborhood from the highest density allowed in the City (4.0 floor area ratio) and unlimited height to various zones. The zone along the river is downzoned to 3.0 FAR and 120 ft. height limit; the area around Lechmere Sales is downzoned to a 35-ft. height limit and additional height and density allowed after a special Planned Unit Development review; the area around the New England Gas and Electric plant is downzoned to a 3.0 FAR and 120 ft. height limit with additional height allowed after special permit. The most critical area is the buffer zone between the economic development triangle and the residential neighborhood (approximately between First and Second Streets). This area is being downzoned from Industrial B which allows almost any use to Business A-1 which limits uses to business, retail, residential, light industry, etc., but eliminates heavy industry and other large disruptive uses. The height limit in this area is being lowered from unlimited height to 35 feet and density reduced from 4.0 FAR to 1.0 FAR. This zone forms a transition area and buffer zone between planned economic development and the residential community.

In response to the problem of trucking and industries buying houses for expansion further into the neighborhood, we have recommended a downzoning of the Industrial B zone on the south and west sides of the residential community to an Industrial A which is designed primarily for lighter industry, reducing the density from 4.0 FAR to 1.0 FAR and reducing the height from unlimited height to 45 feet. The draft zoning represents the City's solution to commercial expansion pressures into the neighborhood without developing confiscatory zoning.

In addition to the above land use controls, the City will develop a neighborhood stabilization program, as discussed previously, to implement physical neighborhood improvements, housing rehab programs, home ownership programs, to address the problem of increased property values and the need to address property tax pressures on homeowners, etc. Economic pressures will have impacts on homeowners by increasing the value of people's homes thus making it more attractive to sell. However, economic pressures will not affect the people living in rent controlled housing, since speculative pressures are limited, but probably will affect people in owner-occupied two-and three-family houses, since these are not under rent control. Possible solutions to economic pressures on this group of people include individual owners not bowing to the lure of higher rents because of personal ties with tenants, housing rent subsidies such as Federal Section 8 and State 701, and home ownership programs. An advantage to homeowners and renters will be a stabilized tax rate because of increased revenues from the new development.

In conclusion we have hired a planner to begin detailed work on this problem and have announced to the neighborhood that a series of meetings will begin with the neighborhood to develop a neighborhood stabilization strategy. We feel that by eliminating the blight in the Lechmere Triangle, providing amenities, and upgrading of the neighborhood in general, East Cambridge residents will not want to sell their houses, but will be happy with a new and upgraded neighborhood environment. The City has hopes that a strong neighborhood improvement movement will grow and that this movement will guide development and build on the new improvements to increase pride in the neighborhood.

The East Cambridge project staff has met with Councillor Duehay of the Economic Development Committee on the need to funnel new employment opportunities to the residents of Cambridge and to gear job training programs for these jobs. An effective employment program will be established. Our experience with the Hyatt Regency Hotel on this type of a program has been quite successful and we anticipate equal success with the Lechmere Triangle developers.

POINT 5

The City plans to make every effort to provide 30-50 dwelling units of the planned new housing for low-to moderate-income people. There are three types of housing generally possible:

1. Market rate housing which at today's construction costs and land costs can range in price from \$50,000 a unit to \$100,000 a unit or more;
2. Subsidized housing which is done by subsidizing a private contractor in several different ways with several types of programs such as Massachusetts Housing Finance and Federal 236 interest subsidies etc. This housing is generally called moderate-income housing and is designed for people or families with incomes, just to give a range, anywhere between \$8,000 to \$20,000. The incomes vary with the size of families, construction costs, financial commitments of the family, etc. The Federal Section 8 and State 701 program provide rent subsidies on market rate housing to bring the housing within reach of low-to moderate-income families; and
3. The final type of housing is referred to as public housing. This is generally owned and operated by the Cambridge Housing Authority for low-income people.

Although no public housing is planned, the City will make every effort to develop 30-50 units of subsidized housing, depending on the total amount of housing built, and will make every effort possible to allow East Cambridge residents, who meet the program requirements, to rent these units. In an effort to develop this commitment to the local community, the City has informed interested developers of this policy, announced its intention at public meetings in East Cambridge, and included this information in its UDAG application. The City has every intention of striving to meet this goal.

POINT 6

The long list of neighborhood meetings, neighborhood-wide distributions of project summaries, distribution of hundreds of copies of the "East Cambridge Riverfront Plan" in the neighborhood, a television talk show, press releases and stories in the Boston Globe, Boston Herald, Cambridge Chronicle, Conty News, Spanish language newspapers, television news coverage on Channel 4, 5, and 7, private discussions and specific topics meetings with the planning team indicate that the neighborhood has a wide knowledge of the project. Public meetings on this project include: a meeting in the winter of 1977 at the Kennedy School with about 70 people, a meeting in the winter of 1977 at the Harrington School with close to 200 people, three public neighborhood meetings on the roadways, three public neighborhood meetings on the UDAG application, two neighborhood public meetings on the environmental impact statement, a meeting two weeks ago on the proposed zoning, a planning team meeting last week to provide a project update and to discuss timing of the project which had close to 50 people, and City Council meetings, etc. These meetings were advertised by using some or all of the following methods: Individual mailings to about 260 people on the East Cambridge Planning Team mailing list, newspaper ads, flyers given to children in the schools, flyers handed out by churches, special notices sent to organizations, and, in the case of one meeting, a 100% door-to-door handout distributed to each household in the neighborhood. People expressed concern for the neighborhood, as they should, in all of these meetings and contacts. However, there was no evidence to support the claim that "this proposed project is not currently supported by the community."

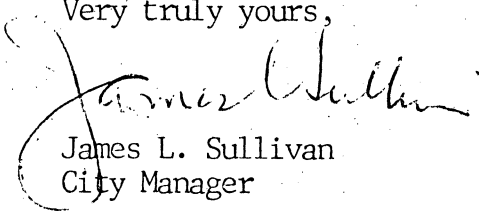
An interesting incident that firmly makes this point is the episode when several East Cambridge residents had heard rumors about the project to the effect that people's homes were to be taken. A project of this size and nature is bound to generate rumors and misinformation. Several hundred names of East Cambridge residents were gathered on a petition to stop the UDAG project. After a neighborhood meeting was held and the rumors dispelled, these people withdrew their petition, which had been presented to the City Clerk for discussion at the City Council meeting. The petition never was presented to the Council.

Another clear indication of support was the unanimous approval by the East Cambridge Planning Team on April 3, 1978 of the UDAG East Cambridge roadway improvements as planned. This meeting was an annual meeting at which over 50 East Cambridge residents attended. Further, the Cambridge City Council, which has been historically sensitive to the needs of the City's neighborhoods, has endorsed the East Cambridge project by a vote of eight to one.

October 3, 1978

In closing, I appreciate the concern of the East Cambridge residents about proposed changes and economic pressures on the neighborhood, and I will continue to work to resolve issues that may affect the neighborhood.

Very truly yours,



James L. Sullivan
City Manager

JLS:jp

cc: Edward Martin, HUD Regional Administrator
John F. Kennedy Building - Room 800
Boston, Mass. 02203

Robert C. Embry, Jr.
Assistant Secretary for Community Development
U. S. Department of Housing & Urban Development
451 7th Street S.W.
Washington, D. C.



City of Cambridge

3,

IN CITY COUNCIL
June 12, 1978

COUNCILLOR PREUSSER

- WHEREAS: The proposal for development of the Lechmere/East Cambridge area has the potential of providing many benefits to the city, particularly to the residents in the area; and
- WHEREAS: It is nonetheless true that a project which is so appealing, especially because of its waterfront proximity, brings with it the dangers of gentrification; and
- WHEREAS: At all costs we want to prevent the excesses of gentrification from occurring in Lechmere/East Cambridge so that long-term residents are not forced to leave the area because of housing competition from young professionals who may well decide to move into the area upon completion of the project; therefore be it
- ORDERED: That the City Manager be requested to instruct the Community Development Department to prepare a concise report which outlines the city's strategy for dealing with the potential problem of gentrification and the steps that are planned to insure the protection of our residential community in this area with the clear understanding that the strategy would be applicable in other areas as well that are affected by major developments;
- ORDERED: That the report address the concept of stabilizing property taxes for affected residents by using a grandfather clause, abatements, or a funding mechanism to compensate residents for the inflationary effect which the development might have upon property tax bills.

In City Council June 12, 1978

Adopted by the affirmative vote of 6 members.

Attest: Paul E. Healy, City Clerk

A true copy,

ATTEST:

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Paul E. Healy".



(617) 876-6800
EXTENSION 344

CITY OF CAMBRIDGE
COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT DEPARTMENT
City Hall Annex - Inman & Broadway - Cambridge, Mass. 02139

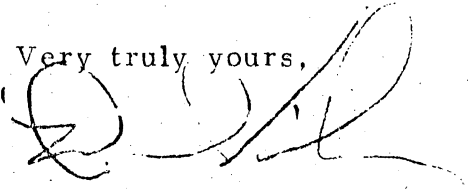
March 23, 1978

Dear East Cambridge Resident:

The City of Cambridge has applied to the Federal Government for money to develop the area around the Lechmere Canal and the river for retail, office, housing and hotel uses. We expect to hear from the Federal Government on whether or not we will receive the grant in the next few weeks. The project will create several thousand jobs and bring badly needed tax revenue to the city.

There have been several public meetings, but with a project this size there will still be many questions. The reason for this flyer is to attempt to answer many of these questions. The major question being asked is how will this affect me? Does the city plan to take my house? The City does not plan to take any residential houses for this project. A summary on the project and how it was developed follows. I have also included a special summary on the roadway improvements. If you still have questions on the project, call me or Alan Zimlicki, the City's UDAG coordinator at 876-6800, ext. 355. Representatives from the City will also be present to answer questions at the East Cambridge Planning Team meeting scheduled for April 6 at 7:30 p.m. at the Kennedy School.

Very truly yours,



David R. Vickery
Assistant City Manager for
Community Development

DRV:jp
Enclosure

A SUMMARY OF THE EAST CAMBRIDGE/LECHMERE TRIANGLE DEVELOPMENT PROJECT

1. What is the purpose of this Project?

The major purpose of the project is to upgrade the area generally between First Street, the river and Monsignor O'Brien Highway. As can be seen in the accompanying illustration, the project also includes an area up to the old Middlesex County Courthouse, the Carter Ink building and the MBTA station. This area is called the project area since this is where the City will focus its work.

A decision to study and come up with a plan to improve the area was developed after several meetings with the East Cambridge Planning Team and community during the comprehensive planning process in 1975 and 1976.

The neighborhood and the city were concerned that the industrial land was becoming blighted and run down. This was happening because old industrial uses were closing and moving from Cambridge leaving many vacant buildings and large areas of vacant land. Examples of this change include the vacant Carter Ink property, the two vacant buildings on the river, the old Casket Company property, Lechmere Construction and others. Hundreds of jobs were lost as these industries left the city. The severe state of deterioration meant in some instances that healthy businesses with plans to expand could not get bank financing as a result of the run down condition in the area.

This blight and deterioration and these large tracts of vacant land and buildings also meant that the city was losing badly needed tax revenues amounting to several million dollars a year. This loss was particularly hard to take because this land is in one of the best places for development in Cambridge. It is on the waterfront with excellent views, there is an unused canal, the area is only minutes from downtown Boston and Logan Airport and major development opportunities were beginning to emerge because of the large amounts of vacant land.

In further studying the Lechmere Triangle and riverfront the city became concerned about the existing zoning and the fact that under this zoning tremendously large and very high buildings could be built with little control by the neighborhood or the city. It became clear to the city that it had to act very quickly to write new zoning laws and build improvements that would protect the neighborhood from uncoordinated development and the traffic that would be generated by this development. The city also had to act to assure that the natural resources, specifically the waterfront and the areas around the Lechmere Canal, were improved and preserved for public use by the neighborhood and city residents.

An urban designer, Dennis Carlone, was hired to develop a large scale solution to many of these problems and come up with a plan that would be most beneficial to the city and neighborhood. This plan was developed and presented to the community in two large well attended meetings in February 1977. Two other meetings were held with the planning team in the fall of 1976 and in March of 1977. After these public meetings there was a work slowdown on this project as ways of implementing it were investigated. This slowdown in the project lasted until September 1977 when the city was informed of a new Federal program called the Urban Development Action Grant (UDAG) program. We discovered that this program could be used to fund development activities in industrial areas that were in a state of decline. After a careful selection process the city decided to apply for funds to use this new program in the Lechmere Triangle. A very limited amount of money was allotted to UDAG nationally which meant that Cambridge had to compete with several hundred other cities for a grant. The City began developing its application and set up a public hearing in December 1977 and a public hearing in January 1978. A review of the environmental impact of the project was undertaken and a public hearing held in March of 1978. In addition to these widely advertised public hearings there were two public hearings on the planned roadway improvements. The application for this UDAG money was submitted to the Federal Government on January 31, 1978.

2. What Does the City Propose to Do in the Lechmere Triangle?

The project consists of two parts: public improvements and private improvements.

Public Improvements - The public improvements are designed to shape the way private improvements will be developed forming a foundation or skeleton and to guide the private development. The parks and roads tend to encourage certain types of development in some places and discourage them in other places. The public improvements are also designed to allow the neighborhood access or a way to reach the parks and waterfront by providing several park strips which stretch up into the existing neighborhood. Altogether the plan calls for over 16 acres of new park mostly along the Lechmere Canal and the river.

The roadway improvements in the plan consist of a widening of Binney Street, a partial closing of the Cambridge Parkway along the river and a widening of Commercial Avenue with three lanes going in either direction. The plan also includes a new bridge over the Lechmere Canal and work to upgrade the Commercial Avenue and Monsignor O'Brien Highway intersection and the Lechmere Square intersection. Part of this plan may include making several one-way streets off of Binney Street to further protect the neighborhood from through traffic.

Another major public improvement would involve building a new MBTA station. This station would probably be constructed across the Monsignor O'Brien Highway from the existing station. A special pedestrian bridge and other signalized crossing areas would be built to allow easy access to this new station by neighborhood residents. Moving the station would allow the city to clean up Lechmere Square and remove the old elevated structure that has long blighted the square. It would also permit the MBTA to improve its service, develop a pleasant station and eliminate a great deal of the danger and confusion caused by the MBTA buses entering and exiting the present station. A great deal of this bus traffic and commuter car traffic would be moved away from the existing neighborhood.

Part of the plan addresses the need to connect the existing neighborhood and Middlesex County buildings to the parks and waterfront. This is done by allowing for beautification along Otis Street from the Lechmere Canal to the old vacant Courthouse building. The plan includes a proposal to restore the oldest portion of the Courthouse for uses by a local non-profit community group who would offer recreation and educational services to the community. This old portion of the Courthouse was designed by Charles Bulfinch, the architect who designed the State House and the U. S. Capital Building. The other portions of the vacant Courthouse would be renovated for private economic development purposes such as law offices, retail outlets and restaurants that could serve the County complex. The old Courthouse would be leased to the non-profit community group by the County. This community group made up of community representatives would support its activities by renting the portions of the building that had been rehabilitated for private use. The community group will not have the power of eminent domain.

One of the most important parts of the plan calls for construction of parking garages to alleviate the terrible parking problem around the Courthouse and in the neighborhood. These structures would be owned and operated by the City. The exact number of spaces or the amount of land needed to build it have not yet been exactly determined. The locations planned are a site between First and Second Streets, Spring and Thorndike Streets and a site at Commercial Avenue and Monsignor O'Brien Highway.

The last major part of the plan is called Neighborhood Stabilization. This is designed to allow the existing residential neighborhood an opportunity to invest in their own houses and improve their own streets. The object of this program is to encourage people to make a new and stronger commitment to their neighborhood and to make the neighborhood a better and more enjoyable place to live and raise a family. This project will allow low interest housing rehab loans, housing rehab grants, painting grants, open space beautification projects, street and sidewalk improvements, assistance to owners of small commercial establishments, tree plantings and other programs.

Private Improvements - The private development that is planned can be broken into four areas: retail, office, housing and hotel. The accompanying map illustrates in a general sense where things will be developed and how they will relate to the public improvements. Since all of these improvements will be private, it is impossible to determine at this time exactly what will be built where and what the mix of uses will be. The attached illustration is designed to serve as an aid and represents the plan recommended by the city. It is understandable and desirable that alterations in this scheme be made as final plans are formulated and the economics of development are settled. The development will consist roughly of about 300,000 to 400,000 square feet of retail space. This could mean two or three stores the size of Lechmere Sales with small specialty retail shops and restaurants. There could be up to 700 units of new housing, although there will probably be less. There will be over 800,000 square feet of office space in five or more buildings. There will be up to an additional 200 hotel rooms and there will be both parking garages and parking lots.

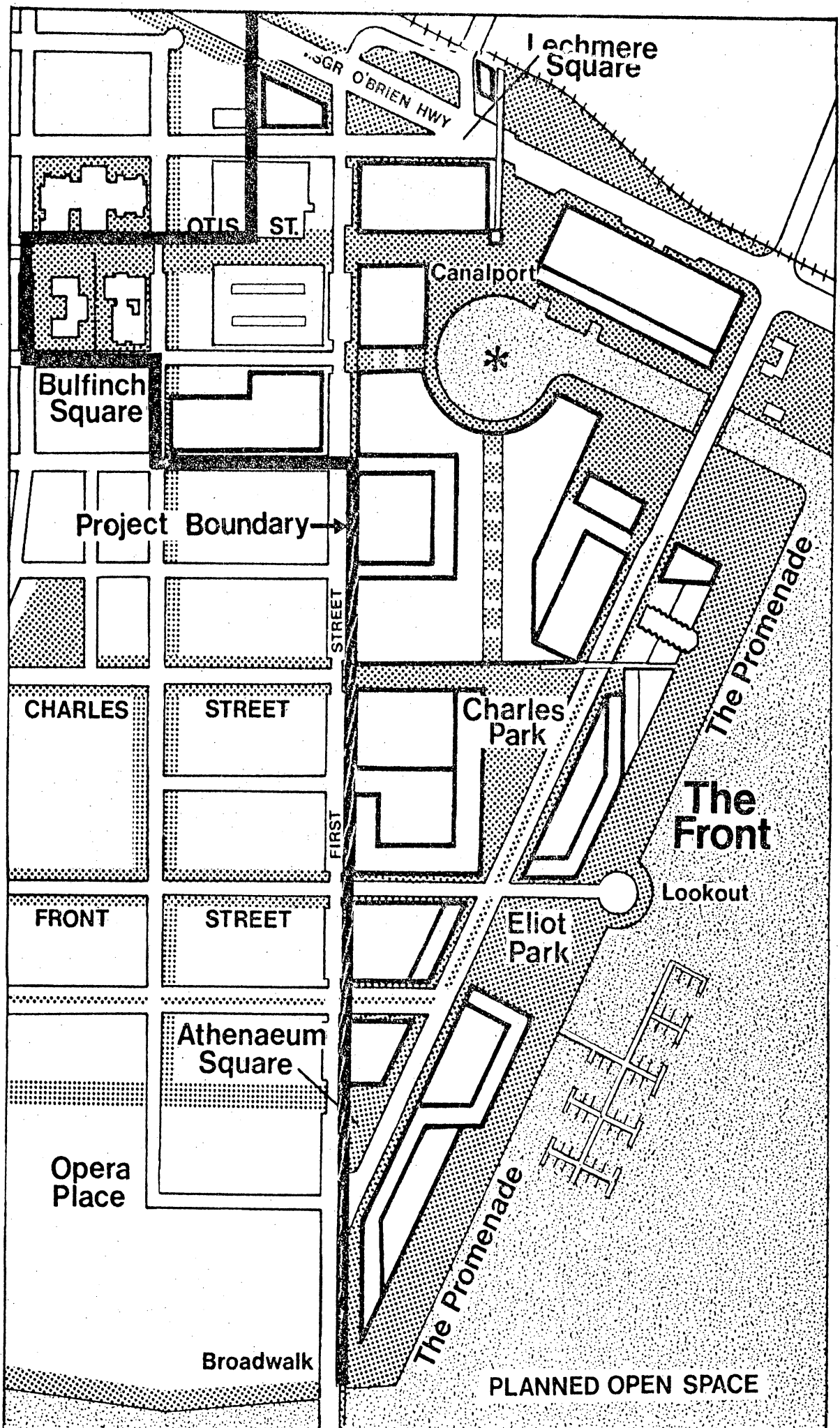
3. How Will This Effect Me; Will My House be Taken?

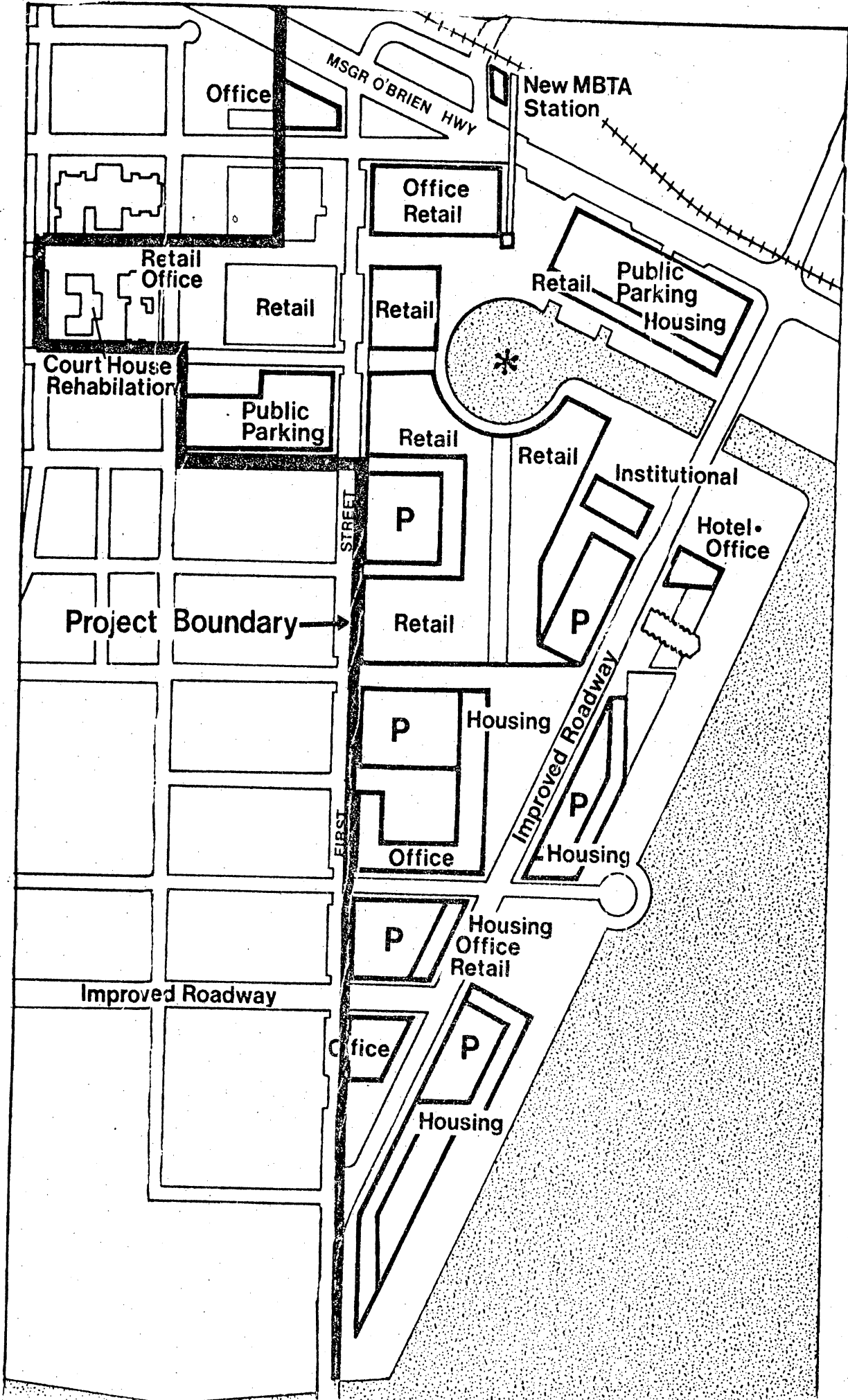
No residential houses will be taken to implement this plan. Some businesses will be affected mostly as a result of the roadway improvements, but it is the city's policy to preserve jobs within the city which means all efforts will be made to relocate these businesses in the best location possible within the city.

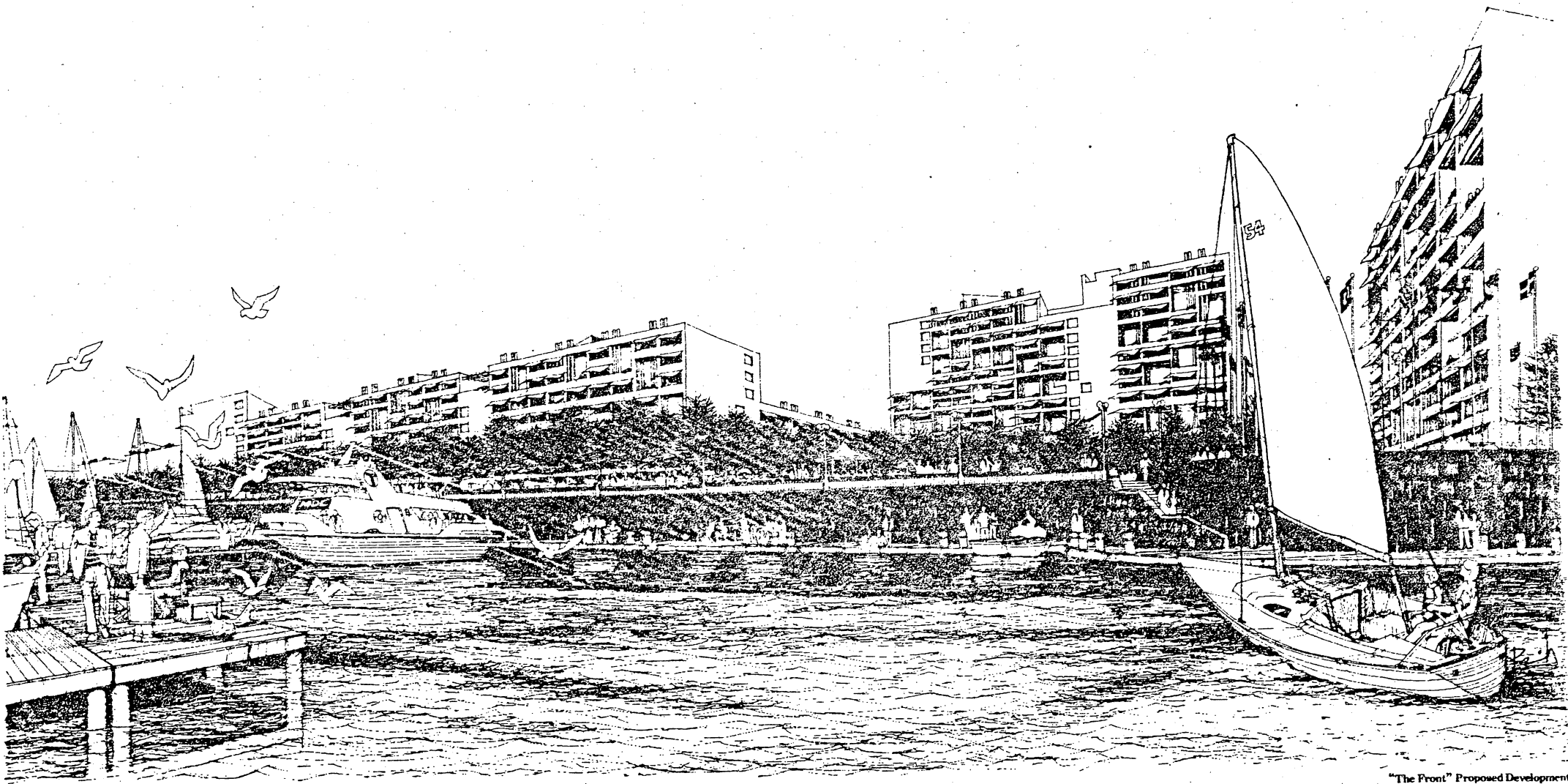
The neighborhood will become a nicer place to live because of all the improvements which will mean that people's property values will probably go up. Most people see this as a benefit. The city hopes that these improvements will encourage families to stay in the neighborhood and enjoy the improved surroundings.

4. What Are the Benefits to the City?

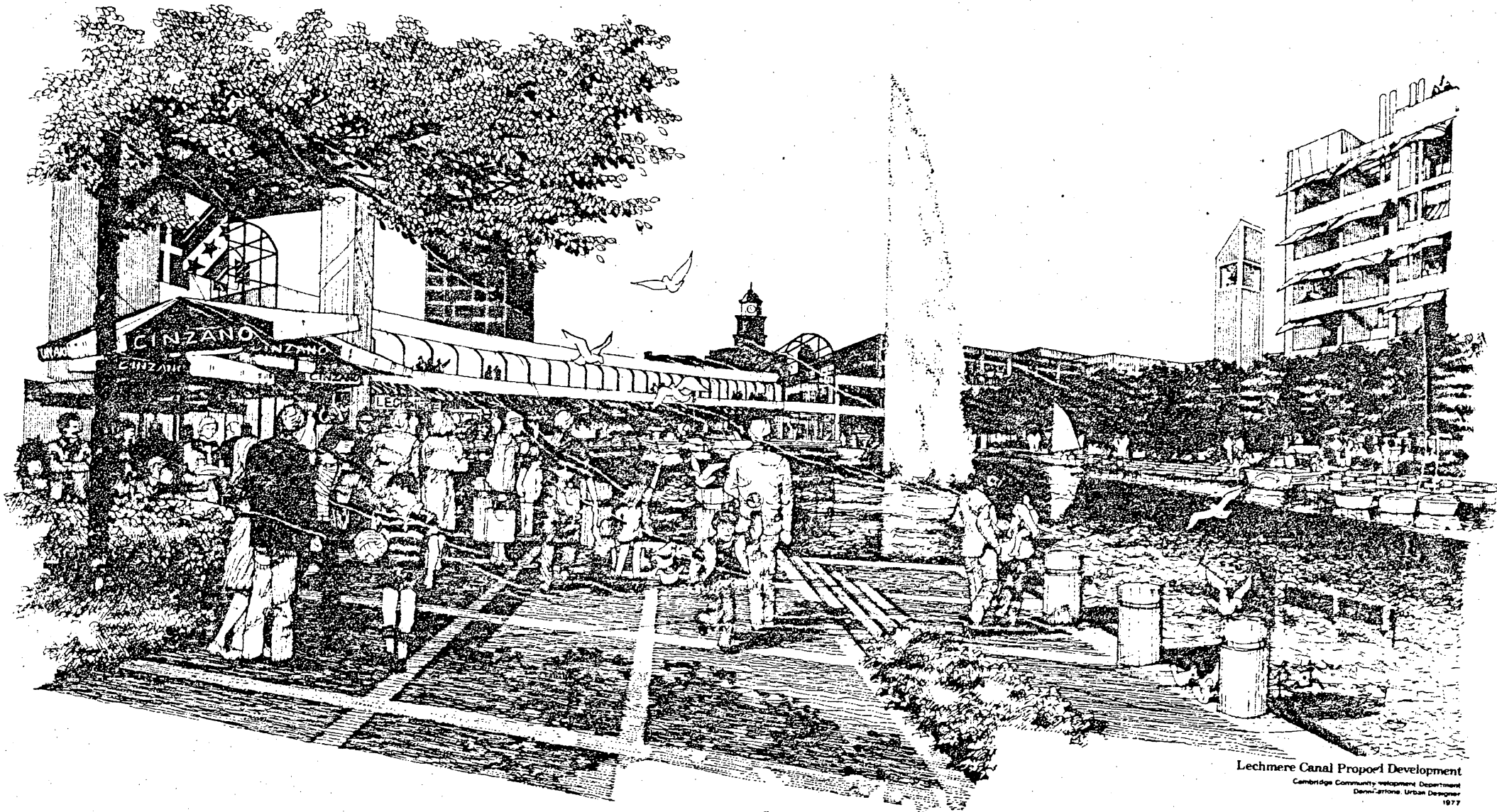
From the city's point of view, the benefits from this project are immense. In addition to all of the parks, roadway, transit station, housing rehab beautification and other physical improvements the city would gain major financial and employment benefits. These include the creation of over 4000 construction jobs over a five or six-year period. The creation of an additional 4100 permanent full time jobs and a property tax return to the city of up to \$5,000,000 per year. This tax return could take up to \$20 off what the tax rate would be and allow the city the leeway to keep the tax rate stable, thus taking part of the burden of increased taxes off of the shoulders of Cambridge citizens.







"The Front" Proposed Development
Cambridge Community Development Department
Dorcas Carter, Urban Designer
1977



Lechmere Canal Proposed Development

Cambridge Community Development Department
Community Planning, Urban Design

1977

the increased opportunity for project success that they will create. While it is not possible to anticipate the precise form and content of all private development that will take place, this project assumes an economically feasible and likely form that meets the intent of the development policies and reflects private commitments to date. These policies prescribe development objectives and list design guidelines that any acceptable private development must follow.

New private improvements included in the project are identified on Figure 11 by upper-case letters that correspond to letters in the text. Table 4 summarizes the use and area characteristics of each development site, and Table 5 describes the nature of private development on each site. Table 6 describes the characteristics of the housing development.

The construction phasing of the private development will generally follow that of the public actions. New development would first take place near the Lechmere Canal, followed by a second phase along the river, and by a third phase at the lower end of the Lechmere Triangle. Timing of construction in the Lechmere Square area would be dependent upon relocation of the MBTA Lechmere Station. (See Phasing Chart Figure 13)

All land acquisition, construction of facilities and site improvements will be carried out by private landowners and developers with no assistance other than development controls by the city. The exception to this would be the city's efforts in creating and supporting with the county a nonprofit community group to redevelop the old courthouse for commercial uses. The nonprofit community group or a project-wide development group possibly formed under Massachusetts Law 121A or 121C would also have the power to take property by eminent domain should this become necessary to implement a specific and integral private development project. It should be emphasized that the city does not anticipate it being necessary to utilize eminent domain proceedings to implement the private development aspects of the project, since the most important land is in the hands of six private landowners and in public ownership.

Public policies used to assure that private development is realized in a desirable form and content are part of this project. The authority behind these policies is based on zoning. A Planned Unit Development provision added to the zoning ordinance as an overlay district is proposed to enforce the development guidelines.



OFFICE OF THE VICE MAYOR

CITY HALL, CAMBRIDGE, MASSACHUSETTS 02139

(617) 876-6800

Lawrence W. Frisoli
Vice Mayor

JULY 17, 1978

PRESS RELEASE

VICE MAYOR LAWRENCE W. FRISOLI
CITY HALL, CAMBRIDGE, MA

RE: 6.8 MILLION URBAN DEVELOPMENT ACTION GRANT FOR
THE CITY OF CAMBRIDGE

LAST WEEK THE DEPARTMENT OF HOUSING AND URBAN DEVELOPMENT
ANNOUNCED THAT THE CITY OF CAMBRIDGE WOULD RECEIVE A 6.8
MILLION DOLLAR URBAN DEVELOPMENT ACTION GRANT FOR THE
EAST CAMBRIDGE LECHERE PROJECT.

IN OPPOSITION TO THIS GRANT, VICE MAYOR, LAWRENCE W. FRISOLI,
HAS FORWARDED A LETTER OF PROTEST TO THE U.S. DEPARTMENT
OF HOUSING AND URBAN DEVELOPMENT.

IN THIS LETTER VICE MAYOR FRISOLI URGES HUD TO WITHHOLD
FUNDING OF THIS GRANT ON THE BASIS OF FRAUD BY THE CITY
OF CAMBRIDGE IN THE APPLICATION FOR THIS GRANT.

IN ADDITION, VICE MAYOR FRISOLI WILL REVIEW THE POSSIBILITY
OF OPPOSITION TO THIS GRANT BY NEIGHBORHOOD PETITION AND
LEGAL ACTION IF THE HOMES AND FAMILIES OF EAST CAMBRIDGE
WILL CONTINUE TO BE ENDANGERED BY THIS DEVELOPMENT.

- A: A four-level parking garage and cinema complex is located near the intersection of Commercial Avenue and Monsignor O'Brien Highway. The garage provides parking for the cinema, buildings on Sites B and D, and (exclusive) replacement parking for the MBTA.
- Site B: A six-story condominium apartment building containing 120 housing units and ground-floor retail is located between the parking garage (Site A) and the Lechmere Canal. Potential location for several Section 8 units.
- Site D: Four levels of general office space over a two-level retail "galleria" are located near the intersection of Cambridge and First Streets.
- Site E: A six-story general office structure attached to a smaller three-story general office structure with 100 surface parking spaces is located at the site of the present MBTA transit station in Lechmere Square.
- Site F: The present Doran Confectionary Factory is located on Cambridge Street between First and Second Streets, and a 50-percent expansion is planned.
- Site G: The existing building located on First Street will be used for retail stores, artisans' shops, and professional offices.
- Site H: A retail complex is located at the end of the Lechmere Canal with two levels facing the Canal and one level facing First Street.
- Sites J, K: A major regional shopping center with a parking garage-delivery building at Site K is located along First Street from the Lechmere Canal to Charles Street. The center contains two "anchor" stores, smaller stores, restaurants, and a luxury food store. The levels of shops face the Canal. The anchor store at Charles Street is also two levels high with the remainder of the center being one story. A large pedestrian arcade links the Canal with "Charles Park" and Charles Street Extension.
- Site L: A small institutional use faces "Lechmere Canal Park" at Commercial Avenue.
- Sites M, N: An addition of 200 rooms and support facilities for the Sonesta Hotel is located at Site N on Commercial Avenue. Two-thirds of the space in a parking garage across Commercial Avenue at Site M is to be used by the hotel and one-third by the shopping center.
- Site O: The existing Sonesta Hotel is located at Site O on Commercial Avenue.
- Sites P, Q: A six-story technical office building is located at Site P on Rogers Street between Commercial Avenue and First Street. It is served by a three-level parking garage at Site P. (Could be...)
- Sites R, S: Condominium housing following a varied silhouette of 7, 6, and 11 stories and containing 184 units is located along "The Green" at Site S. Ground-floor convenience retail, basement parking, and a below-ground-level parking garage is located at Site R facing Commercial Avenue.

increased opportunity for project success that they will create. While it is not possible to anticipate the precise form and content of all private development that will take place, this project assumes an economically feasible and likely form that meets the intent of the development policies and reflects private commitments to date. These policies prescribe development objectives and list design guidelines that any acceptable private development must follow.

New private improvements included in the project are identified on Figure 11 by upper-case letters that correspond to letters in the text. Table 4 summarizes the use and area characteristics of each development site, and Table 5 describes the nature of private development on each site. Table 6 describes the characteristics of the housing development.

The construction phasing of the private development will generally follow that of the public actions. New development would first take place near the Lechmere Canal, followed by a second phase along the river, and by a third phase at the lower end of the Lechmere Triangle. Timing of construction in the Lechmere Square area would be dependent upon relocation of the MBTA Lechmere Station. (See Phasing Chart Figure 13)

All land acquisition, construction of facilities and site improvements will be carried out by private landowners and developers with no assistance other than development controls by the city. The exception to this would be the city's efforts in creating and supporting with the county a nonprofit community group to redevelop the old courthouse for commercial uses. The nonprofit community group or a project-wide development group possibly formed under Massachusetts Law 121A or 121C would also have the power to take property by eminent domain should this become necessary to implement a specific and integral private development project. It should be emphasized that the city does not anticipate it being necessary to utilize eminent domain proceedings to implement the private development aspects of the project, since the most important land is in the hands of six private landowners and in public ownership.

Public policies used to assure that private development is realized in a desirable form and content are part of this project. The authority behind these policies is based on zoning. A Planned Unit Development provision added to the zoning ordinance as an overlay district is proposed to enforce the development guidelines.



DEPARTMENT OF HOUSING AND URBAN DEVELOPMENT

WASHINGTON, D. C. 20410

15 SEP 1978

OFFICE OF THE ASSISTANT SECRETARY
FOR COMMUNITY PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT

IN REPLY REFER TO:

Honorable Thomas Danehy
Mayor of Cambridge
Cambridge, Massachusetts 02139

Dear Mayor Danehy:

Enclosed is a copy of a letter from Vice Mayor Lawrence Frisoli commenting on the Cambridge Urban Development Action Grant.

Under the Urban Development Action Grant Regulations, applicants and recipients have the responsibility to respond to such concerns in a timely and responsive manner. Of particular concern to Vice Mayor Frisoli are the reinvestment of taxes generated through the Urban Development Action Grant project to improve the public areas of East Cambridge and the expansion of job opportunities for residents of East Cambridge.

Please prepare and forward directly to Vice Mayor Frisoli a response answering each issue in his letter. Please send a copy of your response to this office and to the Boston Area Office. We will appreciate such response in ten days of your receipt of this letter.

Sincerely,

Robert C. Embry, Jr.
Assistant Secretary

Enclosures



OFFICE OF THE VICE MAYOR

CITY HALL, CAMBRIDGE, MASSACHUSETTS 02139

(617) 876-6800

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RECEIVED

Frederic W. Frisoli
Vice Mayor

July 17, 1978

Patricia R. Harris
Secretary of Housing and Urban Development
451 7th Street Southwest
Washington, D.C. 20410

Dear Secretary Harris:

Last week the Department of Housing and Urban Development announced that the City of Cambridge will receive a 6.8 million dollar Urban Development Action Grant for the East Cambridge/Lechmere UDAG Project. As Vice Mayor of the City of Cambridge, as a member of the Cambridge City Council, the elected governing legislature body, I hereby request that your Department withhold all funding for this project from the City of Cambridge on the basis of fraud by the City of Cambridge in the application of the City for this grant.

I wish to direct your attention to the following facts:

FIRST: Because of community opposition to this project, the administration of the City agreed that the "Neighborhood Stabilization Program" of the project would consist of three and one half (3½) million dollars in aid to the East Cambridge Community. The application for the UDAG grant allows only one (1) million dollars for the "Neighborhood Stabilization Program." The Cambridge City Manager, after notice of the award of your federal funds, is now disputing the three and one half (3½) million figure. Attached is a copy of a document written and signed by the City manager in which this agreement was made.

SECOND: The application for the UDAG grant funds the restoration of an old "Middlesex County Court House" in the East Cambridge Community for alleged use by a "non-profit community group or project wide development group."

5-22121

without community participation, this building and your funding of its restoration has been already granted to a foreign non-profit organization in a old fashioned Massachusetts political manner. The administration of the City of Cambridge has repeatedly told the residents of East Cambridge and myself that no eminent domain power will be used or is allowed by this UDAG project. In contrast, the application for the UDAG grant specifically states eminent domain power may be used to facilitate the needs of the organization which uses this Old Middlesex County Court House. (see page 33 of the UDAG application-copy attached) There is absolutely no property to be taken in this area except homes; and the non-profit groups which has received the court house is not acceptable to the community.

THIRD: I have received information that one of the private development commitments of the project is not sincere in its letter of commitment. A commitment to development was made as a "special favor" to the City of Cambridge in order that Cambridge would receive this UDAG grant. Funding by this private commitment is to be considered if, and only if, your grant was awarded to Cambridge.

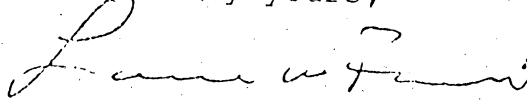
FOURTH: This project, as currently designed, is geared to encourage spin off development in the surrounding neighborhood. The adjacent neighborhood consists of homes of low/moderate income families. This project contains no serious safeguards to prevent poor families living adjacent to this development from losing their homes to speculative real estate development. The "West End of Boston" is not forgotten by the people of East Cambridge.

FIFTH: I would like you to note that this project contains no moderate income housing for the residents of East Cambridge - the community in which construction is to take place. A high administrative official of Cambridge has confided to me that an allegation that moderate income housing (see page 35 of the application-copy attached) was placed in the application "to make it more attractive" to your department - not for any form of serious consideration. All housing construction is to be very high price condominiums.

SIXTH: This project is not supported by the community currently proposed. All records of alleged community meetings on this project reveal very few members of the East Cambridge Community speaking in favor of this development. The majority of the people in favor of the development are land owners who live outside the community.

I would like to thank you for your time and consideration on this matter. I have attached a copy of a press release on this subject which was distributed at the time of this correspondence.

Very truly yours,



Lawrence W. Frisoli
Vice Mayor

LWF/nmo

cc: Edward T. Martin
Regional Administration
Housing and Urban Development
John F. Kennedy Building
Room 800
Boston, MA 02203

Neighborhood Stabilization Program is designed
SF/ J. S. [unclear] [unclear]
to protect the East Cambridge Residents
from the intrusion of adverse activities. The
City will commit 1 M of its in-kind
contribution to improving the streets, sidewalks,
street lighting, ~~and home improvements~~ tree
planting and home improvements working with the
East Cambridge Community. As the ~~program~~
Leisure Program develops in accordance with the
tax base of the Community the City will commit
50,000 per year for a period of 10 years to the
improvement of the public areas in East Cambridge.
The residents of East Cambridge will participate in

4
Establishing priorities for the Neighborhood.

City will seek agreements with
prospective developers to give
Cambridge Residents preference
for jobs to be created.

Agenda # 4

6 = 412
Agenda # 18 vs 10/30/78

Comm. from James L. Sullivan, City Manager,
transmitting a copy of a communication sent
to Councillor Frisoli on October 5, 1978
relative to the East Cambridge/Lechmere
Project.

In City Council,

October 16, 1978

*Charter Righted
by C. Graham*

*See Agenda #18/ on
10/30/78*

No Action on 10/23/78

10/30/78 Placed on File

*Placed on File
10/23/78*